

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner cited the Roden U.S. Patent 5,970,477 as teaching Internet billing by allowing a user to access a plurality of Internet sites via an Internet connection (cost) server in which the user's account is charged different rates depending on the cost of connection to the different Internet sites. The Examiner also noted that Roden teaches that the cost server may be used for purchases of goods and services (Col. 9, Lines 34-40). However, Roden does not teach that the user's account may be billed at a reduced rate due to an awarded credit for viewing advertisements or for performing activities in response to an advertisement (such as providing personal information). The secondary Ferguson U.S. Patent 5,819,092 cited by the Examiner teaches billing a user's account at rates which may vary based on usage, and paying a fixed fee to the user's account for performing an activity such as filling out a market survey or questionnaire (Col. 30, Lines 20-58, 60-67). However, Ferguson does not teach or suggest modifying the amount billed to the user's account with an awarded credit which is variable based on characteristics of the user's responding to one or more activities performed by the user on the website.

Main Claim 194 is now amended to add this limitation clearly defining a difference over the cited references that provides an advantage that the awarded credit is variable based on the characteristics of the user's responding to activities on the website. Claims 195-199 depend from Claim 194 and are deemed to be patentably distinct over the cited prior art on the same grounds.

In summary, Claims 194-199 and the Application are now deemed to be in condition for allowance, and allowance thereof is respectfully requested.